2; Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

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PLATE VIII

1. Grandfather minding Baby Faqér. (See p. 282)

2. Baby worship. Naját standing in field. (See p. 117)

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[Facing p. 96]

Chapter 16

HOME LIFE AT No. 1

293 WHEN the women are working in the fields through the heat
[132] of the day—and it is very, very hot at 7,800 feet with a tem-
● 854 perature of 105° in the shade—they usually have a large square
482 of cotton cloth with them, which they sometimes throw over their heads for protection. This cloth turns in for all sorts of purposes; if you are carrying a small quantity of flour home from the mill you can wrap it up and tie it across from one shoulder to the other armpit and so keep both hands free. If the baby is too small to sit safely on your back or shoulders, you treat it in the same way. In fact, if you see a woman with this kind of bundle that appears to have two lumps in it you may safely guess that it's a baby.

342 I made great friends with the family who worked just below us (I have named them in my notebook Household No. 1), and I felt quite sad when their wheat harvest was over—it was so convenient just to run down and join them in sight of our own windows. They asked me, however: "Won't you come home and sit in our shade?" Of course I accepted with delight. It was just a few steps along the Dála and down one of the little lanes, half path, half watercourse. We came to a slightly taller, mud-plastered wall on the left with a wooden door in it. Through this I stepped in to a tiny courtyard with a shed on each side, one for straw and one for the lambs and kids. The
[333] house itself is just a rough cube of stones plastered with mud, and it has a flat roof with a smoke-hole in it above the central hearth. You go up by a ladder, and the roof makes a nice place for sitting out, watching the neighbours go by, spinning, and drying apricots. It has a second store-room built on a part of

2: Lorimer T-3 (1923–4; 1934–5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

600 floor of No. 7 and found a large group of neighbours flailing buckwheat. They made me welcome, and I tried some photographs. "It was very kind of you to send Nímo for me," said I. "But we never sent for you." Then I repeated what the children had said, and we all laughed heartily—the young monkeys had fetched me out on their own account! A few moments later riders were seen approaching. I sped down to welcome them.

Nice folk they proved. The Swedes used to reach Kashgar through Russia in twenty-four days, but Russian travel being uncertain they had been forced to make the long detour via India and our Gilgit road—a matter of at least three months.

593 Some weeks after my last call on Bibi Gímo I was passing by her home again and was hailed by the children from the roof: "Do come in and see the baby!" I was always chary of too readily accepting such impulsive invitations. "Run down and ask mother if she would like to see me." In a moment Naját came out bearing an authorized welcome. It proved that I had come at a fortunate time, for Baby Faqér had just been lifted for a meal and was kicking and crowing in his mother's arms with wonderful vigour for so small an infant. She took 593 off the kerchief that bound his head—it was a large linen hand- ● 854 kerchief I had purloined from David's store for him, and I 751 gathered that its size and quality were prized—and ran her 291 hand lovingly through his fine crop of dark hair, keeping a watchful eye for possible inhabitants which she gladly failed to find. I was laughed at for admiring his head of hair so much. The kerchief had a funny little needlebook affair attached by bright-coloured threads which had a verse from the Qur'an stitched into it to serve as amulet. Most small children's caps are decorated with several of these gaily coloured, dangling charms, but I should guess that they are merely "the thing," and are not taken more seriously than a charm on a girl's bracelet at home or the mascot on her father's car. Grown-ups rarely display them, but Dádo used to sport a string of them underneath his waistcoat when we travelled.

593 I sat down for a chat while the ceremony proceeded, and I observed that baby-worship is as thorough in Hunza as amongst

ourselves. Naját and Shukuru and all the children were gathered round, but the men were out at work and the house was (relatively) empty. So while the mother fed the child I learned all I could about orthodox baby management. Until the baby cuts his first tooth his mother will not take him to any house where there is another infant. Possibly it is felt that with one tooth he will be armed for self-defence against his contemporary; possibly the rival mothers might be tempted into tactless comparisons. Up till this point, too, no male of the house may handle him. An amusing little ceremony heralds the cutting of this all-important tooth. Some elderly man—usually the grandfather—"well skilled with children," takes the baby in his arms and out into the open. After that his father and brothers are free to play with him and carry him about.

Until the child is two or thereabouts he lives the life of a recluse, strapped into his cradle night and day except at meal-times, or when taken out for an airing in grown-up arms.

When the moment came for replacing Faqér in his cradle, Naját and Shukuru bestirred themselves and fetched some dry, finely powdered earth which they gently warmed over the ashes of the fire. Bibo Gímo produced a large square of strong cloth, sweet and clean but dark with use, and spread it on the dais, lying the baby down on it with a tiny cushion under his head. Then plenty of the earth—it proved to be pounded sun-dried cow-dung, as clean and inoffensive to handle as the fibre in which we plant our bulbs—was packed round him above and below, and he was carefully parcelled up, arms, legs, and feet, into the stout cloth, bandaged into it with a long binder, and laid in the cradle. When he is "changed" the last lot of packing is thrown on to the fields for their enrichment—and that's that. Very cleanly and ingenious it all is and vastly preferable to the eternal washing of "nappies," which, indeed, would be a grim task with insufficiency of cloths, cold water, and no soap.

The bottom of the cradle was full of nice clean straw with a padded mattress on top, and by the time baby's cushion was adjusted and a red quilt laid up to his chin and well tucked in

854 round him, he looked extremely comfortable and well-protected. Next, a piece of wide cloth was threaded by its hem on a rod fastened along the side of the cradle, and passed several times over his tummy and under the wooden cot, being finally lashed to the ridge pole. If the cradle had then been knocked over or rolled down hill baby could neither fall out nor get bumped. Finally a thick blanket was thrown over like a tent, and he was safe from dust or smoke or flies—or fresh air. Mother gave a few gentle rocks and he settled into sleep.

854 The use of the cradle in Hunza is said to be relatively recent,
352 and the pattern of it, wherever it was introduced from, includes the prescription that it shall be made from a special sort of hard wood that grows wild on certain mountain spots and is supposed to possess magical properties. The ridge-pole forms a convenient carrying handle, and wherever you see a group of women working and chatting together, spinning in the shade or on the roof, beating out new-washed wool on a sandy patch beside a stream, pounding kernels, washing clothes, or busy on the threshing floor, you will usually see a cradle or two beside them. Truby King might disapprove of so much infant seclusion; but the flat roof offers a drop of 12 or 14 feet on to boulders, and even the living-room a gentle roll into the open
855 hearth, so that Hunza is no place for crawlers. By the time
593 baby is ripe for toddling, he is old enough to be entrusted to
857 the next-older children, who take him pick-a-back or on their shoulders, scaling walls and leaping streams with him as sure-footed as young goats, and as fearless. They carry him to some flat spot and guard him with the most scrupulous care and proudly watch over his first steps.

163 Babies in Hunza are spaced at intervals of three and four
866 years, so no mother is worn out with child-bearing or embarrassed in her daily work by ex-babies clinging to her skirts and jealous of the infant in her arms. Banu, for instance, was four, sturdy and ripe for independence, before Faqér came to claim the family's attention. Soon after his arrival we used to see her stalking about, proudly taking her first walks alone, and obviously savouring the new freedom from older supervision. One day she had passed twice or three times up and

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

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1. Little girl barely five taking baby brother of two for a ride. Madat, the elder boy, watches the experiment with some anxiety. (*See p.* 137)

2. Fetching firewood in a shoulder basket. (*See p.* 131)

PLATE XV

857

3. Gúlo and friends working mud into "cakes like those Mother makes." A wish-fulfilment of Starvation Springtime. (*See p.* 290)

[Facing P. 176]

1. *tʻališ*, pl. *tʻali.aŋ*, y swaddling-clothes, the cloth in which an infant is wrapped. 854

The child is laid on the cloth with, in winter, a supply of dried cowdung to keep it warm and to absorb its urine. In the hot weather sand is substituted for cowdung.

The child is then rolled up in the cloth and the resulting bundle is tied round with a bandage, *tʌliᵛšɛ bʌn*, (H. *patti*).

The verb used to describe the process is **-ltʌli.as*, from which *tʌliš* is probably a derivative.

Čuram tʌlɨšolo bʌm Ch. was in swaddling-clothes. 242.17. (Cp. Sh. *tʌliᵛš*).

2. *tʌlʻiᵛš -iŋ* y large spindle on to which spun yarn is wound from small spindle, and from which it is eventually wound off into balls. 000

jot gʌnčʌlum thiᵛrum tʌlʻiᵛšʌtɛ imaltərčam. Ho tʌlʻiᵛštsum lorto diᵛwljam they wind the spindleful of yarn from the small spindle on to the *tʌliᵛš*, and then they wind it from the *tʌlʻiᵛš* into a ball.

thʌlo h x y; *thʌlɛ* z seven, — *thʌlo hiᵛri* seven men. *tʌlo gušiŋants* 7 women. 180.10. Cp. 116.2, 192.10. *tʌlo tʌljo* 7 pigeons. 16.14. *thʌlo hakičʌŋ* 7 houses. *thʌlo bʌdʌŋ* 7 paces. 312.10. *thalʻoᵛsa* 7 months. *thalekots* (v. s.v.) 7 days. *tʌlɛ dᵛn* 7 years. Cp. 210.3. *thʌlɛ hɛši* 7 times. *thʌlɛ kum* 7 pairs, sets. *thʌlo ɛčukoᵛn* "The Seven Brothers", the name of a constellation conceived as representing seven brothers on a journey, one of whom got left behind. (Cp. Wkh. *hüb vᵊrüt*, the Great Bear. Sköld). 821

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